

**From:** Scott Meyer  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 11/16/01 9:33pm  
**Subject:** Some Questions

Dear Officers of the Department of Justice:

My name is Scott Meyer, and I am a student at a small college in St. Louis Mo. There are some things about the Microsoft trial which confuse me and which I would like to have clarified. I realize that, with the wash of emails which are probably pouring in, most of your time is probably spent answering messages from important people like lawyers and government officials. But if you could take a few minutes to answer my simple questions, I would greatly appreciate it.

First of all, what is a corporation? I know it sounds lame, but the question has always bothered me. Is a corporation a person, some centralized entity? If so, what kind of rights does a corporation have?

Can a corporation be a citizen? Can a corporation cast a vote? Does a corporation have freedom of speech, etc?

Most people I talk to have said that a corporation is actually a group of people, and since each of the people who make up the corporation can be citizens and have rights, etc, then collectively the corporation must as well. So if a corporation casts a vote, it's actually the votes of all those people who are its stockholders. So now my question is: who exactly is the corporation representing? How many of them are there? And if each one owns a part of the corporation, why do they not all cast their own votes? I mean, surely the votes of that many people together are way more than one vote by a corporation.

I guess my big question is: isn't a democracy supposed to be ruled by the people? I keep hearing people say that corporations rule the world.

Is that true? Are people's rights completely gone now? Is the government, and, therefore, the people, completely powerless to make it's own decisions? What happens when a powerful corporation steps out of line and infringes on the rights of the people as stated in the Constitution? Shouldn't the government, on behalf of the people, make every effort to make sure that the corporation is punished and doesn't do it again?

It seems to me that if the government wants to show that corporations are not the ruling power in the world, and that the rights of the people are more important than some controlling monetary interest, it should make an example of Microsoft and come down as hard as it can. This is not the time for compromise, or for mercy. If a person commits a crime, that person is punished. Therefore, if a corporation is a group of persons, and the corporation commits a crime, those people should be punished. Microsoft has already shown that it can push people

around. Like a feudal monarch, its power is derived from being bigger and stronger than everyone else. Is the government really willing to let itself be pushed around?

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"They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."

-- Benjamin Franklin, 1759

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